



Early Journal Content on JSTOR, Free to Anyone in the World

This article is one of nearly 500,000 scholarly works digitized and made freely available to everyone in the world by JSTOR.

Known as the Early Journal Content, this set of works include research articles, news, letters, and other writings published in more than 200 of the oldest leading academic journals. The works date from the mid-seventeenth to the early twentieth centuries.

We encourage people to read and share the Early Journal Content openly and to tell others that this resource exists. People may post this content online or redistribute in any way for non-commercial purposes.

Read more about Early Journal Content at <http://about.jstor.org/participate-jstor/individuals/early-journal-content>.

JSTOR is a digital library of academic journals, books, and primary source objects. JSTOR helps people discover, use, and build upon a wide range of content through a powerful research and teaching platform, and preserves this content for future generations. JSTOR is part of ITHAKA, a not-for-profit organization that also includes Ithaka S+R and Portico. For more information about JSTOR, please contact support@jstor.org.

THE POTTERY OF THE AMERICAN INDIANS—III

By W. J. HOFFMAN, M. D.

Illustrated from specimens in the National Museum.



FIG. 49. DEVELOPMENT OF FORM—SIMPLE TO COMPLEX

FROM what has been remarked in the preceding articles, the reader has no doubt observed that at the period of the Columbian discovery of America our aboriginal tribes were not

all upon the same plane of culture-status. The ceramic products of certain tribes were of a highly artistic and elaborate type, while those of others were rude and simple, being apparently made to supply only the most needful requirements. This applies to the several Indian tribes when first met with, and also to the pottery found in various repositories, where it had no doubt been placed by its prehistoric makers for safekeeping in some time of attack, or as a store reserved for barter from which the owner was driven by war, or for some other purpose which cannot now be understood.

Art had, no doubt, been surely and steadily developing for a long time, in various localities, and in some instances the more advanced peoples had, perhaps, almost reached a state of semi-civilization; but the influx of Europeans, with conflicting elements, rudely checked the native tendencies in the development of form and decoration, thus causing an arrest of native art to a certain degree, and a gradual adoption of foreign elements. W. H. Holmes, in his well-studied essay in the report of the Bureau of Ethnology for 1882-'83, classifies form, as embodied in clay

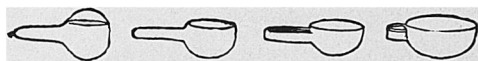


FIG. 50. ORIGIN OF STRAIGHT HANDLES



FIG. 51. ORIGIN AND DEVELOPMENT OF CURVED HANDLES

vessels of American aboriginal workmanship, as follows: first, *useful shapes*, which may or may not be ornamental; and, second, *esthetic shapes*, which are ornamental and may be useful. There are also *grotesque* and *fanciful shapes*,

which may or may not be either useful or ornamental.

The earliest forms of vessels in clay depended, perhaps, upon the shapes of the rude substitutes for them serving the purpose of receptacles at the time of the introduction of the fictile art. Shells and gourds were undoubtedly the most primitive utensils employed, a statement which is generally affirmed by Indians when questioned as to their early history and cult, for in the ritualistic ceremonials and in language, only, can we hope to verify their statements respecting matters of tradition.

To classify according to form the ceramic products of the aborigines, is an undertaking likely to afford only unsatisfactory results, yet a classification by shape is probably the only means at



FIG. 52. A CONCH-SHELL, AND ITS CLAY COPY

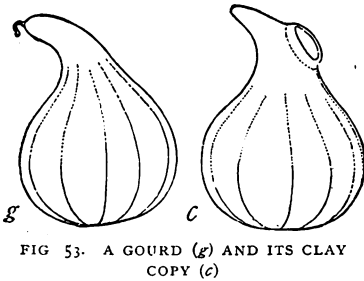


FIG. 53. A GOURD (g) AND ITS CLAY COPY (c)

hand by which the study of development may be facilitated. Selecting, therefore, the examples that may be presented and arranged in classes of types, each of which may be defined by certain general characters, as bowls, vases, ladles, bottles, and others, the gradual development of form may, in many instances, be traced in some groups from the primitive prototypes to the highly conventionalized work of art. In such primary arrangements of types the adventitious features, such as fanciful

variants, and modifications of rims, handles, and other embellishments, must be disregarded by the scientific investigator.

In the classification of form another difficulty is encountered in the absence of a recognized nomenclature, the Greek names applied to classic types being inappropriate to American pottery of simpler and less developed outlines. Mr. Holmes attempted to make an arrangement as to form in what appeared to him to be the natural order of evolution—a progress from the simple to the more complex.

In the first series he placed the basin-like vessels, such as cups, bowls, and dishes; in the second, vases with a wide mouth, which might be designated *pots*; in the third, vases with full bodies and narrow mouths, ordinarily termed *jars*, but, perhaps, more properly bottles; and, fourth, vessels with high narrow necks, universally denominated *bottles*.

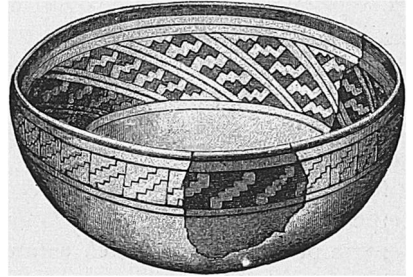


FIG. 54. A BOWL: RIO SAN JUAN

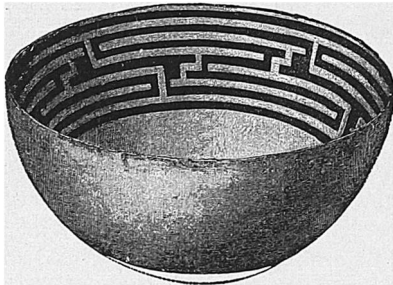


FIG. 55. A BOWL: ST. GEORGE, UTAH

To these series may be added several others: first, compound vessels, or such as are formed by the union of two or more forms in one, like double bottles, etc.; and second, grotesque or eccentric forms, these often consisting of the representation of mythic beings; and third, such as represent the adaptation of human and other animate forms. In the present arrangement, however, the last three series will be taken up in connection with the four preceding types, as

may be found convenient, and as illustrations present themselves.

In the pottery of the Pueblo Indians, of New Mexico and Arizona, an almost endless variety of forms exists, resulting from the union of two or more types of vessels, as above referred to, or else from the imitation of

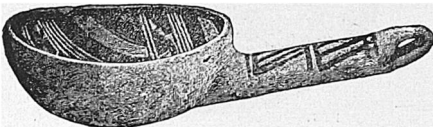


FIG. 56. A DIPPER: TUSAYAN

foreign ware. Special reference will be



FIG. 57. A HANDLED CUP: TUSAYAN

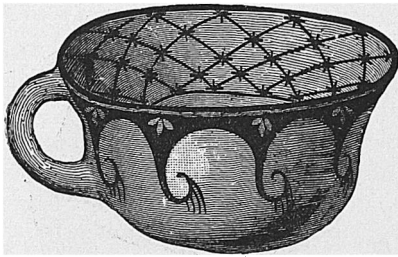


FIG. 58. A HANDLED CUP: ZUNI

made to such variants at the proper time. To intelligently represent the various shapes comprising the first four series, the accompanying scale of forms is given, in figure 49.

Taking, for example, the bowls and corresponding trays, both of which appear to be closely related, we have evidently the most rudimentary type of clay vessels; the original forms having, possibly, been suggested to the savage mind by his having previously employed

for similar purposes such large shells — sometimes affixed to wooden handles — as are to be picked up on any shore, and easily broken into convenient shape. In figure 52 is reproduced the shell, with the native imitation in clay. Large shells more or less of this shape were actually made use of as receptacles, dippers and in various ways, long after the introduction of pottery-making, as doubtless they had been long before.

The gourd, no doubt, also served as a type for various forms of vessels, the chief being the dipper and the bottle. The former was suggested, perhaps, by cutting the body longitudinally at one side of the axis, as shown in the left-hand outline of figure 51. In some parts of Africa and of the South Sea islands, the large ornamented gourds called calabashes take the place of most dishes, and form an important article of trade. Various wild gourds grew naturally throughout all the warmer parts of America, and the

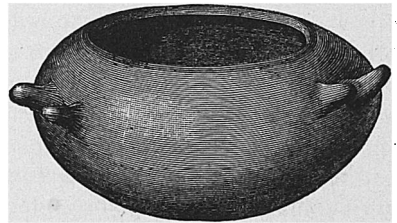


FIG. 59. A MOKI COOKING-VESSEL, WITH EARS

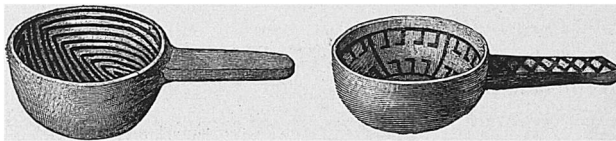


FIG. 60. PREHISTORIC HANDLED CUPS: COLORADO

vines are extensively cultivated to this day in Mexico and Central America for the express purpose of using the dried and excavated fruit as dishes, bottles, dippers, etc.

An illustration of the origin of the development of handles is given in figure 50, the gourd with curved stem being the prototype, while among some of the western Indians the horn-spoon seems to have been copied by the first experimenters in clay.

A gourd cut transversely through the body would represent the simplest form of a cup, which, enlarged to hold a greater quantity of liquid or food, would at once come within the series of bowls. Some interesting examples are given herewith, some of which have handles of various kinds. A handsome polished bowl, from San Juan, in southwestern Colorado, is shown in figure 54. Another example, from a tumulus at St. George, in southern Utah, is reproduced in figure 55.



FIG. 61. A HANDLED BLACK-WARE OLLA: SANTA CLARA

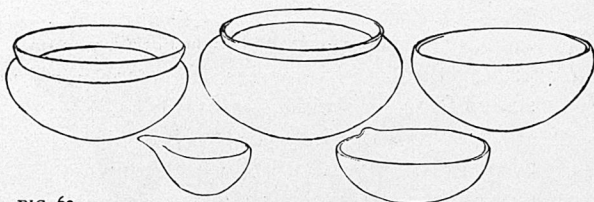


FIG 62.
FORMS OF BOWLS AND CUPS OF UNPAINTED WARE: CHIRIQUI

A small, hemispherical bowl from the ancient province of Tusayan, Arizona, presents a more constricted rim or mouth than the preceding; and Mr. Holmes gives illustrations of a series of similar bowls which represent a gradual return to the original dipper-form, such as the Colorado specimens reproduced in figure 60. Another ladle from Wolpi, one of the Moki towns of northern Arizona,—in the ancient province of Tusayan—has a rather grotesque appearance, and the description of this specimen might be deferred to a future series devoted to similar examples, but its place is deemed more appropriate in this connection, as it is by no means uncommon to find even articles of daily, and, it might be said, of almost common use, presenting evidences of artistic adornment. At the sides of the bowl are the outlines of animals, apparently bears, in the attitude of climbing toward the rim. The interior of such vessels, as well as the exterior, often have painted upon the smooth surface reptilian forms, as well as those of quadrupeds. These, however, are of mythical import and pertain to the cult-ceremonials of the tribes.

A handled form, intermediate between the plain cup and the dipper, has been brought to light from the ancient ruins of

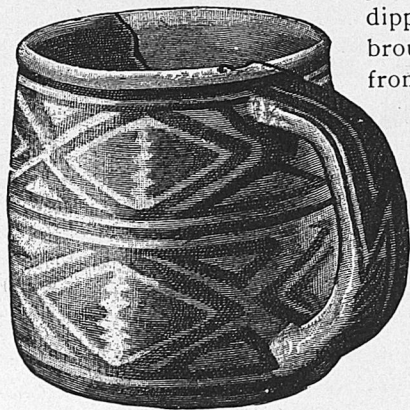


FIG. 63. A HANDLED MUG: SOUTHERN UTAH



FIG. 64. A HANDLED MUG: RIO SAN JUAN

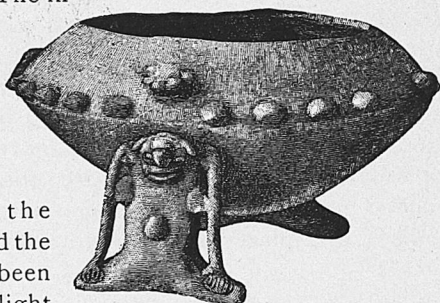


FIG. 65. CUPS WITH GROTESQUE LEGS:
CHIRIQUI

Montezuma cañon, Colorado, two examples of which appear in the illustration numbered 60; the bowls of these cup-like vessels are less than three inches in diameter.

There seems to be but a short step from the cup shown in figure 58, and illustrating a Zuñi form, to the form of the mug, a specimen of which from a southern Utah tumulus is reproduced in figure 63. A more primitive type than this, from the San Juan country,

Colorado (fig. 64), has an outline approaching the contour usually found in the pitchers of the modern Pueblo Indians. The designs upon the vessel indicate bird tracks.

The utensils shown in figures 58, 63 and 64, suggest some additional remarks. They present examples of handled cups or mugs; and it is believed that the single handle upon this type of ware, and upon similar, though larger, vessels, is of purely aboriginal and pre-Columbian invention, and not copied



FIG. 66. A BIRD-FIGURE: SAN JUAN, N. M.

from any European model. Whether the single handle was originally intended as a useful or as an ornamental addition to the plain vase or cup; or whether its adoption was the result of the fracture of one side of a two-handled vase; or an adaptation after the archaic wicker-work water-jar, cannot with certainty be determined. Vessels of this type occur in various localities amongst ruins which are without doubt of a prehistoric period, so we may safely affirm that the type was in use elsewhere prior to the advent of the Spaniards, although it seems to

have been introduced by them among the inhabitants of the modern pueblos. F. W. Hodge, of the Bureau of Ethnology, found handled cups and pitchers at various ruins in New Mexico, particularly at Heshota V'thla, ten miles east of Zuñi, which is reported to be a prehistoric Zuñi village. Among his collections from these ancient pueblos are two specimens, one of which is a mug of coiled ware, obtained in the province of Tusayan. It has a loop-made handle of three coils of clay placed side by side, and resembles in its mode of attachment, the handle of a modern water-jar of wicker-work.

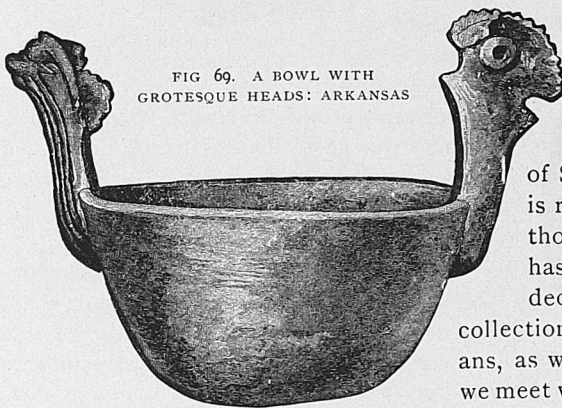


FIG. 69. A BOWL WITH GROTESQUE HEADS: ARKANSAS

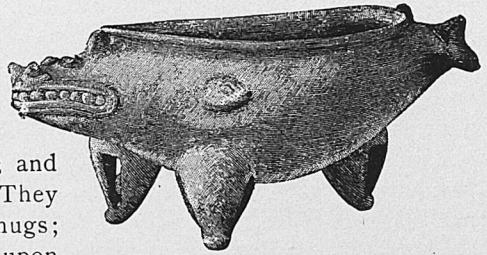


FIG. 67. A FISH-SHAPED BOWL: CHIRIQUI

the archaic wicker-work water-jar, cannot with certainty be determined. Vessels of this type occur in various localities amongst ruins which are without doubt of a prehistoric period, so we may safely affirm that the type was in use elsewhere prior to the advent of the Spaniards, although it seems to



FIG. 68. A FROG-SHAPED BOWL: ARKANSAS

A better example of the pitcher-type, like that shown in figure 64 was obtained from a mound at the Mormon settlement of St. George, in southern Utah. It is rather cumbersome in appearance, though the workmanship is good; and has a highly polished red surface, with decorations in black. Amongst the collections from the Pima and Papago Indians, as well as from several of the pueblos, we meet with excellent imitations of modern

pitchers, some with a round bottom and some with a flat one, as well as having a protruding lip. An attractive specimen of a flat-bottomed pitcher of ancient ware, from the Cañon de Chelly (on the Colorado border of New Mexico and noted for its cliff-ruins), is not naturally different from many modern Zuñi productions and substantially similar to the water-pitcher of a modern dinner-table. Both examples have the bottom-coil or foot-band, that attached to the modern civilized article being only a trifle more conspicuous than in these long-buried ones. As the modern Pueblos adopt many of the practices of their more

civilized neighbors, they find the pitcher and smaller handled vessels very convenient, and copy them to such an extent that even the decorations of common imported ware are now frequently imitated and rudely reproduced upon their own manufactures.

Returning again to the cup-form, we find among the ancient ceramic remains of Chiriqui, in Central America, various shapes with elaborate handles, legs, and other ornamentation. Some of these cups and bowls are so nearly like the commonly accepted form of vases, that differentiation between the two series is

practically impossible. The only difference between them appears to be in size. The primary forms of simple and unornamented vessels are illustrated in figure 62. A beautiful cup, with legs imitating animal-forms, is the upper one in figure 65. This specimen is from Chiriqui, as is also the lower one (figure 65), which has a more constricted mouth, and is supported by two grotesque figures resembling the human-form. The oblong vessel drawn in figure 67, is modeled after a fish; the wide mouth is armed with teeth, while fins upon the back are rather conspicuous.

The origin of the practice of modeling life-forms in clay is uncertain, but the signification of shape and attitude may be looked for in the mythology, cult-rituals and superstitions of the makers. No doubt, the grotesque and fanciful shapes may often have been the result of fancy. Among some mound-remains from the Mississippi valley, various bowls have been obtained presenting imitations of reptiles, birds, and grotesque heads. A frog-shaped bowl from this lot is shown in figure 68, while an animal-shaped bowl, from Arkansas, is reproduced in figure 73; and additional interesting examples might have been culled from the stores of American antiquities in Washington, Cambridge and other anthropological museums, as figures 66 and 69.

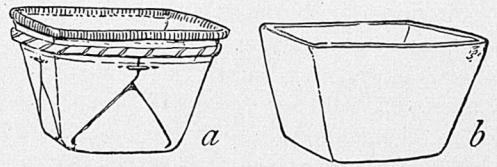


FIG. 70. A FORM OF CLAY VESSELS (b), DERIVED FROM BIRCH-BARK VESSELS (a)

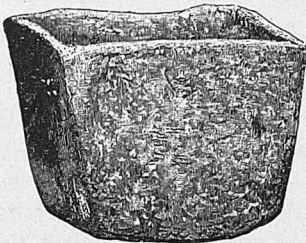


FIG. 71. A RECTANGULAR BOWL: ARKANSAS



FIG. 72. A TROUGH-SHAPED VESSEL: ARKANSAS



FIG. 73. AN ANIMAL-BOWL: ARKANSAS

Square and oblong bowls seldom occur, the former being perhaps made in imitation of bark vessels as shown in figure 70, *a* being the original model, while *b* represents the product in clay. An example, in further illustration, is shown in figure 71, which is rather rectangular in form. The oblong and trough-shaped vessels are without doubt in imitation of the more primitive types of wood and steatite, similar to those produced by the natives of the coasts of British Columbia and Alaska, and in the Hudson Bay country. An oblong wooden bowl from Point

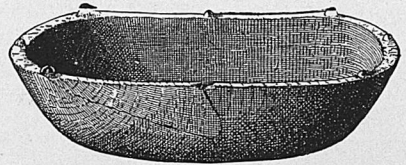


FIG. 74. WOODEN MEAT-BOWL: ALASKA

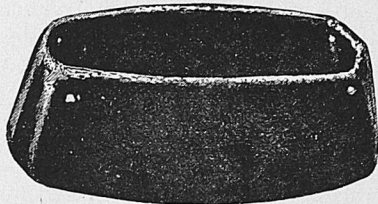


FIG. 75. A SOAPSTONE KETTLE: NORTH-EASTERN ESKIMO

Innuits, are larger at the top than at the bottom, while those of the Innuits living eastward of Hudson bay are exactly the reverse, as appears in figure 75, in imitation of the birch-bark basket in general use among the Indians throughout the country of the Great Lakes, Hudson bay and the Mackenzie River valley.

Soapstone has been a favorite material for making cooking-utensils in all parts of the world, since it was easily carved, durable, and stood fire well. It was commonly known and employed in prehistoric and early civilized times in Europe, and still survives for a few such purposes. Boiling-pots and roasting trays were made of it by the Indians of our southern and eastern states, as is shown by many relics found in New England,

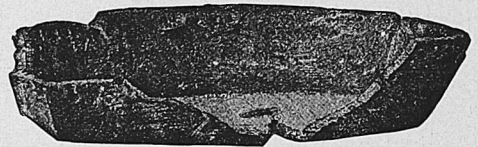


FIG. 76. AN OLD STONE POT: ALASKA

Pennsylvania and southward. It was in southern California, however, that this material reached its maximum of use, and yielded the greatest variety and perfection of utensils. This was particularly true of the island of Santa Catalina; where pots and pans of stone were carved out of the steatite ledges, carefully shaped and ornamented, and then taken to the mainland to be bartered for furs and various articles desired by the islanders.

These Californian utensils were usually ornamental with incised lines, and had ears or handles; and so completely did they and the fine baskets, supply the want that pottery was almost unknown in that region.

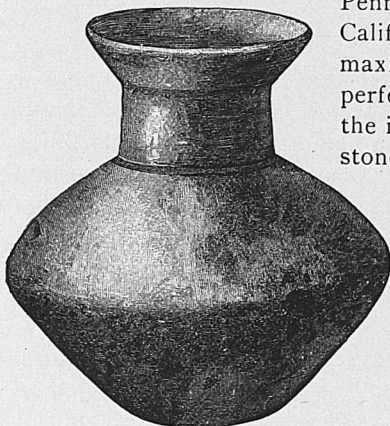


FIG. 77. A BOTTLE-SHAPED VASE

(To be continued)